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College freshman courses in the humanities and social science were selected to determine the usefulness of audiovisual materials in seminars and to determine whether the materials would be utilized by the instructors. An attempt was made to determine the most effective type and design of materials.

Analysis was based on instructor reaction to audiovisually equipped rooms supplied with selected, especially designed and prepared materials. The instructors decided which materials were used and how and when they were used. A liaison instructor within each department worked with the seminar instructors, television instructors, and graphic staff in the preparation of the materials. He also introduced and explained the materials to the seminar instructors.

At the end of the semester, 11 statements were given the instructors to be answered anonymously. Faculty reaction was fairly positive. Multi-media instructional materials were effective tools during seminar discussion. Emphasis should be placed on the careful planning of materials designed for maximum flexibility. The equipment should be easy to operate, light, and accessible.

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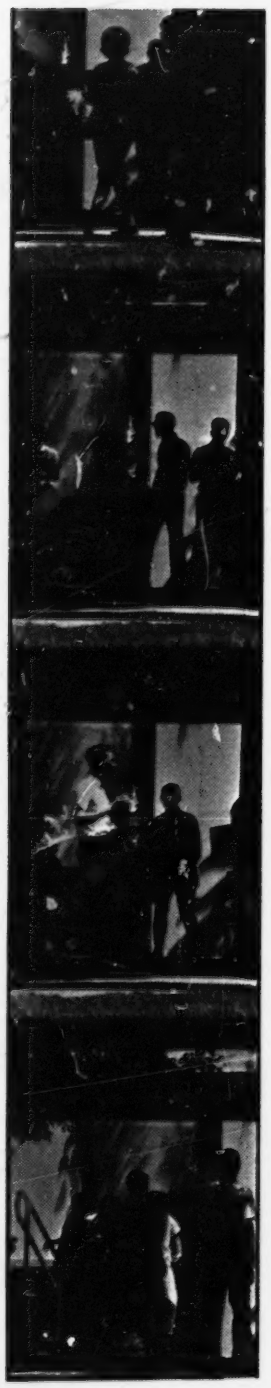
THE USE OF MULTI-MEDIA INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS WITHIN THE SEMINAR

A FEASABILITY STUDY

ROBERT M. DIAMOND

JULY, 1964

Report 5



SUPPORTED BY A GRANT FROM THE FUND FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATION

THE USE OF MULTI-MEDIA INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS WITHIN THE SEMINAR

A Feasibility Study

July 1964

Robert M. Diamond

Office for the Study of Instruction, University College, University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida.

This study conducted under a grant from the Fund for the Advancement of Education.

BACKGROUND

Traditionally, the various instructional media, films, slides, overhead transparencies, tapes, etc. have found their widest use within the lecture situation where the student primarily listens and takes notes. However, the lecture itself is only one part of the instructional pattern in many courses.

In the lecture-seminar configuration presently being used in the majority of University College courses at the University of Miami, the seminar instructors have often found the need to refer to visual materials utilized during the lectures (particularly when television is involved) or to find new materials for emphasis or to help answer student questions. In several of the courses the need for a wide assortment of convenient maps has been continually stressed by the faculty.

In an attempt to explore ways of improving the quality of instruction this office, in cooperation with the departments involved, began to explore the feasibility of preparing packages of instructional materials designed specifically for use within the seminar.

The following study was undertaken to see if: a) when selected and designed for the purpose, audio-visual materials could help facilitate discussion with the seminar situation, and if b) when made available, these materials would be utilized by the instructional staff. At the same time, an attempt would be made to explore the type and design of materials that would prove most effective within the discussion format.

THE COURSES

For the purpose of the study, two freshman courses were selected, Humanities 101-102 and Social Science 101-102. While both courses have seminars associated with them, the basic format is different.

Humanities

Seminars are required and meet twice a week for the honors sections and once a week for students required to take the writing laboratory. During the period of this study, there were 90 seminar sections of approximately 20 students each. These were directed by 11 graduate assistants assigned three seminars each and 9 regular faculty members who were responsible for from one to seven sections. Humanities seminars are designed to unify all the work within the course by discussion and to pursue in depth those areas, by necessity, covered briefly in the lecture.

Social Science

Seminars are voluntary but students are not allowed to sign up after the regular registration period. The 24 seminar sections meet once a week with a regular faculty member and have a registration of from 16 to 30 students each. Seminars are designed to answer student questions and clarify points highlighted in the lectures.

PROCEDURE

Equipment

Each of five seminar rooms were equipped with screen, overhead and slide projectors, drapes for room darkening and, in the room used by Social Science, a filmstrip projector. Tape recorders were available when required. The equipment was selected for simple operation and placed within a locked cabinet in each room for easy accessibility.

Approximate cost of equipment per room:

Slide Projector	$130.00
Overhead Projector	135.00
Screen	17.00
Tape Recorder	149.00
Cabinet	60.00
Overhead Cart	24.00
Projection Cart	29.00
Total	$544.00

Material Selection and Introduction

Within each department one instructor was designated as liaison between the Instructional Center, Office for the Study of Instruction, and the seminar instructors. This faculty member had two basic functions:

1. Working with the seminar instructors, television instructors and graphic staff in the selection and designing of those materials to be placed in the rooms.

2. Introducing the materials and possible applications to the seminar instructors.

Throughout the project there was an emphasis on selecting and designing those materials that would facilitate discussion or help answer potential student questions. For example, several series of slides were prepared highlighting contrasting styles of architecture with the slides placed in such an order to facilitate this approach. Basic maps were made available on overhead transparencies and on several occasions excerpts of the music being studied were provided on tape. (A complete list of materials utilized during the spring semester within Humanities 102 will be found in Appendix A.)

To facilitate coordination, weekly meetings were held within the Humanities course to introduce the materials that were to be placed in the rooms and to discuss possible techniques of application.

Utilization

Of primary importance was the fundamental approach, continually being stressed, that if, when, and how the materials were to be utilized was up to the individual instructor. There was at no time any pressures put upon the faculty to use the prepared materials.

At the end of the semester a questionnaire was sent to all seminar instructors.

Results (based on 18 replies)

1. Generally, I have found these materials to be:

__5__ extremely effective
__8__ of some use
__4__ of little help
__1__ a waste of time

2. Generally I would say that these materials were:

__2__ extremely effective in promoting discussion
__10__ of some help in promoting discussion
__2__ of little help in promoting discussion
__4__ detrimental in promoting discussion, tending to make one lecture

3. I have found the materials to be:

__2__ extremely well worth the amount of time required for utilization
__8__ worth the amount of time required for utilization
__5__ not worth the amount of time required for utilization

4. When materials were made available, I:

__4__ always used them
__7__ usually used them
__5__ rarely used them
__0__ never used them

5. (Humanities only) I found the Monday planning meetings:

__3__ extremely helpful
__5__ of some help
__3__ of little help
__3__ a waste of time

6. The reaction of the students to these materials was:

__0__ extremely positive
__8__ positive
__9__ neutral
__0__ negative
__0__ extremely negative

7. When slides were made available, I generally:

__9__ used all of them
__2__ used over one-half of them
__2__ used some, but less than one-half
__1__ rarely or never used them

8. When slides were made available, I:

__7__ always used them in the order prepared
__6__ usually used them in the order prepared
__2__ rarely used them in the order prepared
__1__ never used them in the order prepared

9. During this past semester I utilized the various machines as follows:

	Every week	Nearly every week	Approximately 3 to 10 times	Once or twice	None
Overhead projector			3	8	5
Slide projector	1	1	13	3	
Tape recorder			1	8	4
Filmstrip projector (Social Science only)			2		1

10. I would rate this approach to seminar instruction:

__4__ excellent
__11__ of some help
__2__ of little help
__1__ a waste of time

11. I would continue __9__, discontinue __3__ this procedure.

DISCUSSION

Generally we find that the faculty is fairly positive toward this approach. There were, however, several faculty members who were consistent in their negative reactions. There were comments

of too much materials as well as too little, and some instructors felt that they were forced into a lecture pattern by these materials. Since the questionnaire did not, for obvious reasons, request the instructors name, the interesting question concerning a possible correlation between teaching experience and utilization remains unanswered.

There were, however, certain problems that did arise and that could have been prevented. In his review of the project, one instructor commented "The first semester effort was partially frustrated by the failure of the instructors, I, among others, to clarify and focus our own thinking about what was needed. The effort of the second semester was much more successful."

A scheduling problem in the Humanities course made it necessary to have the orientation meeting Mondays at 1:00 P.M., after several seminar sections had already met. There was also a continual problem of getting the materials completed in time. Being a new experience there were many instances where the material packages were not as well designed as they might have been. In one or two cases the slide packages were either too brief or too large with the order placement seriously open to question. However, the potential of random access to slides possible with the projector being used did lesson somewhat the problem of order placement. As the project progressed it became increasingly apparent that the material packages had to be prepared with extreme care and insight. Key slides

were sometimes omitted and a map with too much information tended to confuse rather than help.

As the semester progressed the sophistication of the materials being prepared increased with the tape recorder-overhead combination proving extremely effective within one of the units.

The filmstrip projector was utilized only within the Social Science course as filmstrips related to the Humanities course were not available.

The problem of equipment operation was negligible. A short meeting was held at the beginning of the semester and within an hour the majority of the faculty were able to operate the equipment being utilized. The machines selected were choosen for maximum flexibility and minimum weight and size. It should be noted that, based on 75% of the faculty using the materials, each of the material packages was utilized a minimum of 50 times reaching approximately 1,200 students each semester. Many of the instructors used these materials again for review purposes before examinations or at the end of units.

By the end of the second semester the sophistication of the materials and their uses improved measurably. As one instructor put it "The advantages, as I saw them, were that the students had an opportunity to examine at greater length certain important slides, to make comparisons, to ask questions, to relate periods and styles in art, sculpture, and architecture to each other. Further, many

students diffident in literature were informed and vocal in other areas where they were stimulated by visuals. My own seminar groups happened to respond well to these devices, and I personally found them fruitful in stimulating factual discussion and critical judgments based on what was actually being seen or heard."

One final point should be mentioned at this time. Perhaps the most exciting aspect of this approach was in the wide variety of ways identical materials were used by different instructors. As the semester progressed, it became more apparent that the materials which allowed a maximum degree of flexibility were proving the most effective.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The multi-media instructional material package can be an effective tool in the hands of the faculty during the seminar discussion period.

2. It can be anticipated that all materials will not be, and should not be, utilized by all the instructors involved.

3. In the preparation of the materials, emphasis must be placed on careful planning with the materials being designed to allow for maximum flexibility in use. It is possible to prepare materials that will facilitate active discussion.

4. The materials should be made available to the instructional staff well in advance to allow the faculty to become familiar with the materials and their potential applications.

5. The equipment must be easy to operate, light and accessible.

As the results of this preliminary study, the Humanities Department and Honors Curriculum of the University College, University of Miami, have requested that the number of seminar rooms equipped with the various projectors be increased from five to nine and that the material packages be prepared for the sophomore level courses.

During the 1964 summer session the materials for the fall courses are being selected, designed, and prepared to enable the entire program of transparencies, slides, tapes, etc. to be available before the semester begins. At the beginning of the term, each faculty member will receive an instructor's guide listing in detail the materials that will be available and for each package there will be a description of suggested applications. This guide will contain paper copies of each transparency included in the kit.

These materials are being prepared under the direction of a faculty member serving as communications coordinator. The preparation has already involved the talents of specialists in biblical history, Asian civilization, music, art, literature, and other subject fields. For example, it is anticipated that the fall semester kit of materials for use within the freshman Humanities course will contain approximately 25 transparencies, 3 slide packages of 3 grouping each, and several tapes.

As the materials are being prepared several trends are obvious. The number of slides on any one subject is being decreased with the number of individual slide packages being greatly expanded, particularly those of a comparison nature. There is also a noticeable increase in the number of overhead transparencies being utilized with emphasis being placed on simplified historical maps and the use of the transparency for discussions on art, architecture, and music.

A followup report on this approach will be published at the conclusion of the next college year.

Appendix A

Seminar Materials--Humanities 102 (Spring 1964)

Slide Packages	No. of slides
1. Byzantine Art and Architecture	
Basic Characteristics	10
Comparison Greek, Roman and Byzantine Art	9
Hagia Sophia	9
Manuscript Illumination and Mosiacs	12
2. Romanesque Architecture	
Basic Characteristics	8
Cluny III Church Plans	8
Saint Sernin at Toulouse	8
3. Gothic Architecture	
Cathedral at Rheims	16
4. Renaissance Art	
Sculpture	15
Painting	15
5. The Elizabethan Theatre	8

Transparencies

1. Dante: Devine Comedy
   1. Cosmology
   2. Divisions of Sin

Additional transparencies prepared for special section[1] seminars.

1. Outlines of major medievil philosophical positions.
2. Church floor plans and interiors
3. List of major terms.
4. Paintings with overlays showing composition analyses.
5. Renaissance Philosophy.
6. Comparitive linguistics.

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[1]An experimental section with "live" lectures taught under the "team" approach involving for instructors.